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Communication for development programmes in the United Nations system

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 51/172 of 16 December 1996 on communication for development programmes in the United Nations system.

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Annex

Report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 51/172, including the recommendations of the Sixth Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

1. At the Sixth Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development, organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) at Harare in 1996, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) was nominated to organize the Seventh Round Table, scheduled to take place in Brazil in November 1998. As stated in General Assembly resolution 51/72 of 16 December 1996 such round tables are becoming a regular but informal mechanism for inter-agency cooperation and coordination for promoting and advancing communication for development. For that reason, measures have always been taken to involve development partners both within and outside the United Nations system.

2. In response to Assembly resolution 51/172, UNESCO has also contributed to the implementation of the recommendations of the Harare round table within its mandate and programme.

3. Concerning the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa (recommendation 1), UNESCO has prepared a document indicating the conceptual framework and strategy for the action, objectives, expected results, budgetary requirements and coordination mechanism. The sum of $100,000 was allocated to support the programme, and to organize an inter-agency meeting at UNESCO headquarters in November 1996 and a regional consultative meeting at Addis Ababa in June 1997, with the participation of United Nations agencies, the World Bank, the Government of Ethiopia, African professional media associations and non-governmental organizations. The objectives of those meetings were to discuss the documents and draw up activities in selected pilot countries, propose networking arrangements among organizations and identify ways of mobilizing funds for the programme. UNESCO has selected five pilot countries (Burundi, the Congo, Ethiopia, Liberia and Mali) to undertake national studies on communications and peace-building. Some of those studies have begun, and their findings will be discussed in 1998 with a view to drawing up national plans of action and project proposals for each of the five countries. Identification of extrabudgetary funding to support those projects is under way.

4. As suggested in recommendation 2, UNESCO has sought to ensure the long-term sustainability of development work by transforming aid-supported project facilities into:

(a) National institutions capable of generating their own income, such as the Regional Film and Video Training Centre at Harare;

(b) Foundations that continue the project work on a professional basis, such as the Tambuli Foundation for Community Radio in the Philippines;

(c) National training centres working on a semi-commercial basis, such as the West African News Agency Development Training Centre at Cotonou, Benin.

5. As proposed in recommendations 3 and 4, UNESCO has supported initiatives in community radio for rural development (in Gambia and Ghana), and especially for the empowerment of women (India, Cape Verde, Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname). In project design, the possible use of solar energy and applications of informatics have been taken into consideration. The hand-operated "wind-up" radio has been examined for possible use in development projects, including preferential costs, and is already being manufactured commercially in South Africa.

6. In the spirit of recommendation 5, several projects in developing countries have made use of informatics and related technologies for networking of journalist schools, networks of women media practitioners, news and information dissemination through the Internet, cataloguing and documentation of news photo agencies, programme logs and scheduling of broadcasts, and desktop publishing, including electronic transfer of photos. Where appropriate (at Nairobi and Windhoek), local servers have been set up, thus increasing the local capacity to access and exploit information.

7. In accordance with recommendation 6, UNESCO is implementing a project to develop the Federation of African Media Women in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region.

8. As urged in recommendation 7, UNESCO has encouraged and sought to assist member States in the building of capacities and institutions to use communication for development, a major programme area in UNESCO supported by the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). Since 1996, UNESCO has been implementing over 150 projects for some $30 million in communication and development in cooperation with IPDC. In Africa in particular, UNESCO has been implementing a special project since 1996 for the evaluation and redesign of curricula for training communication personnel. Curricula for training at pre-university and university levels, as well as in-service and further training, will be designed and tested by 1999.

9. In anticipation of recommendation 9, UNESCO, together with several other specialized agencies, has contributed both financially and intellectually to the preparation of an analytical, evaluative and comparative study of project cases using communication to attain development objectives. The study entitled "Communicating for development: human change for survival", by Colin Fraser and Sonia Restrepo-Estrada, has now been published.

10. Concerning recommendation 10, UNESCO has contributed both to programme support of and media relations for United Nations initiatives, in particular the organization of the United Nations youth forums at Vienna in 1996 and at Braga and Lisbon in 1998. Top priority is given to implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women and Development in 1995, particularly to women on the Internet and the training of women media practitioners. With the United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and UNICEF, four projects for communication and AIDS prevention are being implemented in 1998; four more are planned for the remainder of 1998 and for 1999. UNESCO is preparing to organize the upcoming meeting of UNAIDS co-sponsors in the Caribbean in 1998. UNESCO has cooperated with the World Health Organization (WHO) in activities concerning communication and drug abuse prevention, and the creation and support of health communication networks. With the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNESCO has contributed to supporting the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the rights of indigenous peoples; and the rights of cultural, ethnic and religious minorities. UNESCO, with the Office of the High Commissioner, provided logistics for the meeting of the Working Committee on Media and the Child at UNESCO in April 1997.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

11. In its support to the implementation of Assembly resolution A/51/172 and the recommendations of the Sixth Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development, the priorities of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Communication for Development Group are (a) identification and appraisal of communication needs to support agricultural and rural development, and (b) the application of appropriate communication policies, strategies, media and messages. The decisive role that communication plays in sustainable development is promoted and advocated, with special attention to how communication can establish a dialogue with rural people, mobilize their participation in development activities, and convey the information and skills they need to put agricultural knowledge and technologies to best use.

12. Through participation in over 60 field programmes and projects, training is provided in communication skills, methodologies and media. Specific emphasis was given to providing communication support to the Special Programme for Food Security and related FAO priority programmes, such as communication assistance to the Pan African Rinderpest Campaign and the Caribbean Amblyoma Programme. In all, communication strategies utilizing a range of media have been designed for development programmes and projects in more than 25 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and elsewhere.

13. A major contribution is in the effective use of communication strategies and media in Africa, where 65 per cent of FAO Communication for Development activities were carried out during 1996–1997, in response to the urgent need to improve food security in the region through sustainable agricultural and rural development. Emphasis is placed on the use of rural radio, one of the most widespread communication tools in Africa that is especially effective for teaching remote rural audiences. Other media and communication processes ranging from traditional media to video to modern communications are also used, often in an integrated approach to stimulate the awareness and capacity of rural people to actively participate in development.

14. In general, emphasis is given to technical advice to Governments on communication as part of development policy, establishment of national communication systems that can support development initiatives; training in communication skills, methodologies and media; and

identification through research and field practice of innovative, successful and cost-effective communication approaches for specific audiences and messages. Examples are traditional folk media for population education; rural radio for community involvement and to reach remote areas; multimedia packages for farmer training; the use of video media for making community needs "visible" to development planners; and the Internet for linking researchers, extension agents, educators and producer groups to each other and to global information resources.

15. Studies have been conducted to identify innovative communication strategies, including assessment of the role of the new information and communication technologies in rural development. In Chile and Mexico, electronic information networks have been developed to provide farmers with production and marketing information. Through an FAO programme of cooperation with academic and research institutions, a visiting scientist has documented these Latin American experiences and others in the Middle East and Africa, resulting in a programme strategy for the Internet and rural and agricultural development. The following are some elements of that programme:

(a) The Virtual Experiment Station (VES): an interactive learning and communication network using Internet technologies to facilitate the generation and sharing of knowledge between research workers and extension agents. Plans are currently under way to pilot VES in Egypt, with wider multi-country and regional applications envisioned for the future;

(b) Multipurpose community tele-centre in Mali: a joint UNESCO, International Telecommunication Union (ITU), International Development Research Community (IDRC), WHO and FAO initiative at Timbuktu, Mali. FAO is responsible for agricultural and rural development component of the project, especially in linking the tele-centre with rural radio to reach remote audiences. In southern Mali, an FAO project currently works with four rural community radio stations to incorporate an audience-participatory strategy for two-way communication. ITU and other partners have expressed interest in FAO participation in similar tele-centre projects in other African countries and in Asia (e.g., Viet Nam, Bhutan and India).

16. In cooperation with national Governments, technical advice has been provided on communication policies and systems, for example in Guinea-Bissau, the Central African Republic, Zambia and Cape Verde. In Burkina Faso, a workshop brought together participants from 21 African countries to assess the status of rural radio, identify constraints and prepare action plans for rural radio development. Based on the action plans, FAO prepared a multi-country project for United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) funding with activities related to radio infrastructure and equipment improvement, development of legal and institutional mechanisms and capacity-building through research and training.

17. In Mali, the FAO helped to establish a multimedia production services centre that plays a key role in supporting national capacity to implement communication for development programmes and projects. The centre has developed a participatory communication methodology and numerous training packages, and has trained approximately 50,000 people from 183 villages in Mali. In the subregion, the centre is becoming a cost-effective and financially sustainable provider of multimedia services in support of communication for development in various countries.

18. Assistance has been provided in establishing a regional centre of communication for development within SADC at Harare. The centre promotes the sustainable and systematic use of communication in the development process. It aims to ensure rural people's participation in the decision-making process and to empower them to design, manage and implement their individual and collective development initiatives, using an innovative participatory rural communication appraisal and strategy design methodology developed by FAO. Its training communication advice, technical backstopping, monitoring and evaluation services to its fee-paying clients are rapidly enabling the centre to operate on a cost-recovery basis. A management plan is in place for achieving financial sustainability in four years, based on product and service diversification and outsourcing through the regional network of communicators that it has established and through the strengthening of local and national development and training institutions.

19. Policy advice has been provided to Zambia resulting in the Ministry of Agriculture's decision to decentralize radio broadcasting for rural development to the provinces under its agricultural sector investment plan. In accordance with the Government's privatization policy, specifically the Societies Act and legislation allowing for the liberalization of radio broadcasting, an economic and financial feasibility study has been completed with FAO support. The goal is to establish community-managed, provincial radio stations that can provide development-related and entertainment programmes at the local levels and in the respective vernacular languages. Recurrent costs of such radio stations will be offset by income generated through personal announcements, commercial advertising and programme sponsorship. A first five-year investment and technical

support project is currently being designed to establish Radio North West for the north-western province.

20. Communication assistance has been provided in Morocco to a broad range of community-based development activities to enhance people's participation in the decision-making process and in designing, managing and implementing development efforts. Loans are being facilitated for income-generating activities, in particular for women's groups, and communication skills training is provided to enhance group formation and dynamics. Those community-based development activities have included both pilot-scale and nationwide programmes covering watershed management projects, natural resource and range rehabilitation projects, drinking water supply and management projects, and food security assistance.

21. In looking to the future of communication for development, it is clear that the core concern should be the human factor in development. Communication for development is most useful when it starts by listening to what people already know, what they aspire to become, what they perceive as possible and what they can productively sustain. As societies move towards greater democracy, decentralization and market economies, and as new technologies become more widely available, conditions are improving for people to steer their own courses of change. But it is essential to stimulate their awareness, mobilize their participation and improve their knowledge and capabilities. Communication strategies, skills and technologies are central to those tasks.

United Nations Children's Fund

22. It was decided at the Sixth Round Table that the Seventh Round Table would take place in the Latin American and Caribbean region. UNICEF was nominated to host that meeting, which will take place at Bahia, Brazil, in November 1998.

23. As to Assembly resolution 51/172 and actions taken by UNICEF towards implementing the recommendations of the Sixth Round Table, the most noteworthy details are set out below.

24. Sustainability, management and financing are essential components of UNICEF project planning, as suggested in recommendation 2. UNICEF's animation projects, "Meena communication initiative for South Asia" and "Sara communication initiative for Africa" are examples of this type of planning. Meena is an animation series designed to promote the rights of the girl child in South Asia; the series is comprised of 13 episodes. The Sara series addresses the disparities and problems faced by the adolescent girl in eastern and southern Africa. The publishing, merchandising, and sale of the series have allowed those projects to become viable and independent.

25. In concurrence with recommendations 3 and 4, UNICEF continues to support rural radio and community radio. For example, the UNICEF Regional Office for West Africa has helped in the development of a training kit for rural radio producers. In April 1998, UNICEF served on the coordinating committee for a Voice of America-sponsored two-day seminar on the theme "Broadcasting for child survival". That meeting brought together community broadcasters, international radio stations and communication non-governmental organizations with the object of forming alliances and networks to promote the use of community and local radio for development, focusing on radio's power to communicate health messages.

26. UNICEF has continued to take an interest in the development of the "wind-up" radio. BayGen, a South Africa-based company, manufactures the radio which uses a coiled spring to power a three-band receiver, thus obviating the need for expensive batteries. BayGen has several times briefed UNICEF on developments and future plans. In 1998, the UNICEF Supply Division purchased a large quantity of the radios for distribution to field offices for evaluation and testing.

27. In order to continue capacity-building efforts in support of recommendation 5, UNICEF is developing an internal knowledge network for sharing programme information, statistics results of evaluations and other data. In the longer term, the intention is to widen access to that data in the form of a UNICEF "Extranet" that would give access to UNICEF programmatic counterparts, Governments, intergovernmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, etc.

28. UNICEF has made significant investment in training packages in communication for use in developing countries in accordance with recommendation 7. UNICEF has developed journalism training packages with the Thompson Foundation, a highly respected United Kingdom-based journalism training school. The materials aim to encourage better standards of reporting, to support a more critical approach to the news, and to encourage the development of a fairer, more caring society in which everyone has an equal place, with a particular focus on women and children. Workshops utilizing the manuals have been held in India, Sri Lanka, Mozambique, Romania, Kenya, as well as in the South Pacific, Thailand, Malawi, Nepal and Albania.

Themes covered included: "Children and women in vision" (for TV journalists); "Children and women on the air" (for radio journalists); "Children and women in the news" (for print journalists); and "Enfants et femmes a la une" (for print journalists). Each of the manuals provides the basic materials – lecture, notes, exercises and examples – for a three-week course in development reporting.

29. Other UNICEF training materials that have been developed include "Communication for behavioural change and development", a training package on behavioural change communication that has been tested in Romania and Togo, and later in 1998 in China and Ethiopia (the training package will be finalized and released in 1998); "Academic training in communication and social mobilization", a course to promote the integration of communication/social mobilization content in academic and training institutions curricula in developing countries (regional short courses are presently being designed and/or offered in Benin, the Phillippines, Brazil, Colombia, Ghana and Romania); and "Strengthening participatory attitudes in communication and development", a participatory learning workshop targeted at UNICEF programme staff and their partners in Governments and non-governmental organizations, which helps them apply participatory approaches in their daily development work, and reviews the principles and practices of adult learning, problem solving and participatory processes that promote ownership, build capacity and foster empowerment, along with communication skills and qualitative and quantitative evaluation.

30. UNICEF is also collaborating with the British Broadcasting Corporation to produce a handbook and training workshop on radio and television audience research.

31. Efforts suggested in recommendation 9, such as collaboration and information-sharing, are central to UNICEF's ongoing communication activities. Currently, UNICEF, in collaboration with other United Nations agencies, donors, foundations, non-governmental organizations and academic institutions, is participating in a communication initiative to enhance the impact of communication interventions on development. The purpose of the initiative is to improve the communication information base from which organizations can draw relevant and up-to-date data, access best practice information, develop partnerships, and increase dialogue on key communication issues. The information base will assist each organization in planning and decision-making. The information network will focus on the communication for development dialogue, as well as serve as a venue for valuable partnership-building.

32. UNICEF has supported communication programmes that have highlighted recommendations of United Nations conferences (recommendation 10). For example, the interactive multimedia exhibit, "Summitry works: words into action", was produced for the World Summit for Social Development at Copenhagen and the Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing. The exhibit presented an overview of the six major international conferences and summits held in the 1990s. The exhibit addressed the various issues discussed at those conferences, as well as the role of the United Nations in facilitating solutions, mobilizing resources and promoting grass-roots action. Each conference in the exhibit was represented by a multimedia interactive table which was a symbolic piece of a jigsaw puzzle. When fitted together, the pieces illustrated the interrelatedness of the conferences, the issues and the problems faced by the world today.

United Nations Population Fund

United Nations Population Fund mandate and the International Conference on Population and Development

33. The global advocacy priorities contained in the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action (e.g., the formation of attitudes and the establishment of policies and programmes that promote choice, access to reproductive health services, gender equity and environmental stewardship) receive major attention from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

Support to the integration of information, education and communication and advocacy in national population and development programmes

34. One of the most important features of the Programme of Action is its underlying theme of interdisciplinarity and the corresponding need for a coordinated approach to dealing with population issues. Information, education and communication (IEC) and advocacy are the two major types of UNFPA-supported communication operations at the country level, and they are fully integrated in all programmes. For instance, IEC is no longer a separate "work plan category", as was the case under UNFPA's previous system of programme classification of population activities.

Under the system introduced after ICPD, IEC activities are designed and implemented as an integral part of programmes in UNFPA's three thematic areas: reproductive health, population and development strategies, and advocacy. In fact, many of the IEC activities related to advocacy have been subsumed in the advocacy thematic area in the new classification.

35. IEC interventions encourage male involvement and communication between partners regarding reproduction and sexuality; promote positive male-involvement role models through the mass media; and use male-involvement and gender-equity themes in media relations, educational and promotional activities.

36. The major change in UNFPA's treatment of development communication is the identification, in a 1995 Executive Board paper DP/25, "Programme priorities and future directions of UNFPA in the light of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD)" (DP/25), of advocacy as an important communication approach for galvanizing broad-based political commitment and financial support for population activities, and placing population concerns on development agendas.

37. UNFPA supports two types of advocacy. The first type are advocacy activities in a population programme as an essential component for creating an environment conducive to implementing the programme. The issues addressed include the adoption of a reproductive health and rights framework; population and development strategies; gender, population and development; partnership with the media; and advocacy for resource mobilization. The second type of advocacy involves UNFPA as an advocate for a wider range of issues emanating from the 1994 ICPD Programme of Action and agreements reached in other conferences, but will not generally involve funding operation-related activities.

38. Assistance in advocacy may be provided to support a holistic approach to women's health over their lifespan, including post-menopausal services. Advocacy may also be supported to integrate the human rights approach to the provision of reproductive and sexual health services and information to women and adolescents, including consensus-making consultations and other activities designed to enlist the support of policy makers, and support for legislative reform and enforcement of laws for the promotion and protection of women's rights to reproductive choice and informed consent, in particular promotion of women's legal literacy about regulations and policies that affect their rights and responsibilities in family life. Advocacy, including IEC activities to promote zero-tolerance of violence against women and for the eradication of traditional practices that are harmful to women's reproductive and sexual health, such as rituals associated with puberty, marriage, childbirth and widowhood, may also be supported. Educational reproduction programmes on the prevention of tract infections and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDs, may also be supported, including skills on negotiating safe sex practices with partners.

39. Advocacy communication may be carried out in many ways: through mass media campaigns, public speeches, exhibits, symposia, contests and/or awards (public recognition), lobbying (for example, of appointed or elected officials by non-governmental organizations and/or community groups), recruiting and working with goodwill ambassadors, public debate and so forth.

40. In addition, UNFPA continues to support population education as a major activity, and to pursue a strategy of integration to make population education a permanent part of existing educational curricula at primary and secondary levels and in teacher-training institutions. Population education materials are periodically updated with emerging concerns and priority issues, such as those highlighted in the ICPD Programme of Action.

Two-way communication systems and community participation

41. Effective communication in reproductive health/family-planning programmes is a two-way process that depends, in large part, upon the service providers' understanding of users' perspectives, their empathy for the clients and their ability to meet those perceived needs. Although the scope of UNFPA communication programmes, from an early emphasis on education, has broadened to an array of information, outreach and advocacy, many of them involve women and adolescents in both programme design and implementation.

42. UNFPA support for activities targeted at adolescents has expanded dramatically in the last decade. Moreover, a recent UNFPA thematic evaluation on adolescent reproductive health has provided impetus to strengthen government action to address adolescent reproductive health needs. Since the majority of adolescents still do not have access to information and education on sexuality, reproduction, and sexual and reproductive health and rights, providing adolescents with access to such information, education and services is thus the main challenge for future UNFPA programmes.

43. Another interactive communication trend is emerging in UNFPA's support to communication in support of ICPD. As promoted in chapter XV of the ICPD Programme of Action, partnership with the civil society organizations, including non-governmental organizations, is increasing. The Programme of Action places new emphasis on non-governmental organizations and the private sector as excellent resources whose collaboration may be sought for creating awareness and social mobilization around population and environmental issues, gender concerns and reproductive health, including sexual health. That partnership is particularly critical to intensify efforts to promote reproductive rights in the context of human rights. Participation may be achieved by seeking advice from non-governmental organization membership, and by such activities as the use of qualitative research, community meetings, listening to clients and telephone hotlines.

Communication for development programmes in support of specific sectors, such as HIV/AIDS

44. Youth and adolescents are among the groups most vulnerable to HIV infection, and are thus a target for UNFPA assistance. So are women. At the country level, most UNFPA-supported communication activities are integrated into reproductive health information and service programmes and advocacy programmes.

45. In the area of communication for behaviour change to prevent HIV/AIDS, UNFPA collaborates with other agencies in in-school and out-of-school education activities; training of reproductive health information and service providers; and IEC activities focusing on HIV/AIDS, as part of population and reproductive health programmes. During 1997, in addition to collaboration and cooperation with the other UNAIDS co-sponsors, UNFPA collaborated closely with non-governmental organizations involved in implementing UNFPA-supported HIV/AIDS-prevention projects in 80 countries. UNFPA employed innovative approaches in some 96 countries to address the needs of in- and out-of-school youth, young women, males in the labour force, employees of the police and the military, and female prisoners. Modern media and traditional channels of communication have been used to raise awareness among policy makers and the general public. In Kenya, for example, under the UNAIDS theme group framework, support has been provided to roadshows in rural towns and trading centres to convey messages in an entertaining and interactive manner. In Latvia, multimedia events, such as "Rock against AIDS" and "New rap generation against AIDS" together with film clips and television serials, have targeted youth and adolescents. Similarly, in Namibia, two drama groups, Puppets Against AIDS and Yatala, have organized "Dramas for health" workshops that highlight the health and social implications of HIV/AIDS and convey HIV-prevention messages.

Capacity-building in introducing technologies and innovative methods for enhancing communication for development

46. UNFPA provides support for population information among population professionals as a means to increase awareness of population issues and the relationship between population variables and social and economic development, including the establishment and strengthening of clearing houses and documentation units, and collaborative efforts that foster the generation, compilation and dissemination of population information, using the Internet and related technology. UNFPA may also provide support for training courses and seminars for population librarians and information specialists.

47. UNFPA was also a co-sponsor of the Global Knowledge Conference in 1997. Following that initiative, the Fund is now a member of the Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP). GKP comprises agencies of the United Nations system, the private sector and non-governmental organizations, some of which were co-sponsors of the GK'97 conference. It functions as an informal and innovative alliance of organizations that can leverage resources to facilitate access to global experiences and best practices in information and communication for development.

48. At the country level, in the context of Governments' programme activities, advocacy is part of country programmes, and thus UNFPA's role in advocacy is to help countries to implement advocacy activities. To that effect, capacity-building absorbs a major proportion of UNFPA-supported communication projects, including training of media specialists in the treatment of population issues; training of advocacy organizations in addressing gender equity, reproductive rights, women's empowerment and reproductive health; training of service providers in reproductive and sexual health counselling and interpersonal communication; training of peer education for adolescent reproductive health; and training in the management of communication programmes.

Inter-agency cooperation in communication for development

49. UNFPA works within the resident coordinator system to support certain system-wide advocacy goals, including those endorsed by major global conferences and the follow-up Basic Social Services for All Task Force.

50. At the international and regional levels, UNFPA is keen on seeking inter-agency cooperation for communication for development. In addition to the Global Knowledge Partnership mentioned above, it actively participates in the following communication international forums and task forces: the Inter-Agency Task Force on Behaviour and Communication, the Round Table on Communication for Development, and the E-9 Summit on Education for All.

51. However, the major feature of UNFPA's inter-agency cooperation in communication for development rests in a unique set-up of multidisciplinary country support teams and specialized support services. Since 1992, UNFPA has established technical support services arrangements at the headquarters of partner agencies (UNESCO, WHO, the International Labour Organization, FAO, the United Nations, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, and a number of non-governmental organizations) and in nine regional country support teams at Addis Ababa, Harare, Dakar, Bangkok, Suva, Kathmandu, Santiago, Alma Aty and Amman. The country support teams host about 200 regional advisers; more than 50 of them are responsible for providing state-of-the-art technical assistance in communication programming, either in IEC in support of reproductive health, advocacy, population education, and/or for sociocultural research. Country support teams also maintain a comprehensive and expanding network of national and regional communication experts, universities and research institutions, non-governmental organizations and private-sector companies that can provide technical assistance to countries in the area of communication.

Focal points for issues concerning communication for development

52. At UNFPA, issues and activities concerning communication for development are increasingly dealt with in a decentralized fashion. At headquarters, there are two complementary poles: on the one hand, the Information and External Relations Division deals with global media relations, public information and corporate advocacy; on the other hand, the Technical and Policy Division performs a policy formulation and advisory function for strategic planning, research and the definition of indicators for country programmes, and also strategically designs and monitors the intercountry projects. The Education, Communication and Youth Branch, which formerly served as focal point for communication in the former Technical and Evaluation Division, no longer exists. Instead, social scientists with a specialization in communication for development are spread across the three branches of the new Technical and Policy Division. The communication specialists of the country support teams constitute the regional level of technical assistance for communication at the request of individual country programmes. At the national level, communication projects are increasingly executed by national agencies, including non-governmental organizations.